

# Avocado

## History

The avocado can be traced back through central-American history to 500 B.C. when Mesoamerican tribes began to grow avocado trees. In the 16<sup>th</sup> century Spanish explorer Martin Fernandez de Enciso described an avocado in the book he was writing. Avocados reached Europe via Spanish travelers.

Avocados were originally called “agovago pears” before being given the name “avocado” by Irish Sir Hans Sloane. He also referred to the tree as the “alligator pear-tree” because of the fruit’s dark, pebbly skin and pear-like shape.

Henry Perrine planted avocados in Florida in the 1800s. They became a staple there in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The United States grows avocados in California, Florida, and Hawaii. 95 percent of American avocados come from California. Mexico grows the most avocados in the world thanks to their tropical climate.

Avocados are consumed differently around the world. America consumes a great deal of avocados in the form of guacamole. In Taiwan, avocados are served with milk and sugar. In Indonesia, they are made into a drink with milk and coffee. In the Phillipines, they are pureed with sugar and milk. In Mexico, the leaves are used as flavoring for wraps for tamales.

Avocados contain “good fat”- monounsaturated fat- that is good for heart health and your body’s absorption of vitamins A, D, K, and E.

## Varieties

**Hass** has pebbly skin and creamy flesh.

**Fuerte** is pear shaped and has a slightly smaller seed.

**Bacon** has a light taste and easy-to-peel green skin.

**Gwen** is round with a small seed and gold-green flesh.

**Pinkerton** is large with a long shape and small seed.

**Reed** is round with a thick skin.

**Zutano** has shiny yellow-green skin.



## Fun Facts

- George Washington ate avocados in the West Indies
- Almost 140 million pounds of avocados were consumed in America on Super Bowl Sunday in 2016
- The large seed at the center technically makes the avocado a fruit
- Americans ate 4.25 billion avocados in 2014 –Los Angeles ate the most



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